

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the Specification by substituting the following amended paragraphs:

[0036] Fig. 5 is an external isometric view of reaction cuvette 24, like that described in co-pending application Ser. No. 10/623,436 ~~Ser. No.: 10/_____,____~~ assigned to the assignee of the present invention, as having features to inhibit liquid wicking along an interior wall surface so that the presence of undesirable contaminants on the exterior surface of reaction cuvette 24 is minimized and the efficiency of washing by wash station 67 is increased. The reaction cuvette 24 shown in FIGS. 5 and 5A may be formed as an essentially rectangular box-shaped part 24 with a mutually opposed front wall and back wall 70 perpendicular to and separating two mutually opposed side walls 72. A generally rectangular lower section 74 closed by a curved bottom surface 75 supports an open top section 76 with opening 77. A pair of projecting ledges 78 are formed on opposing sides of cuvette 24, each having a latching bulge 79 to facilitate automated handling formed therein. As seen in FIG. 5A, the thickness "a" of side walls 72 is generally uniform within lower section 74 but gradually decreases between a junction, indicated by dashed line 80, between lower section 74 and the top section 76 and located generally about 40% of the distance from the bottom surface 75 to the top opening 77. Anti-wicking fillets 82 are formed as a smooth transition that effectively blends the intersections of front and back walls 70 and side walls 72. It may be seen in FIG. 5A that the wall thickness "a" of side walls 72 decreases smoothly to a value "b" about 75% of "a" and thereafter decreases smoothly to a value "c" about 60% of "a". Thus the internal dimensions of cuvette 24 slowly decrease from the value at opening 77 to the value at dashed line 80 to facilitate insertion of a drying boot seen in FIG. 10B and described later. Front and back walls 70 are similarly shaped for the same reason.

[0039] Slide 92 is curved to match the radius of curvature of outer cuvette carousel 14 so that cuvette ports 20 holding reaction cuvettes 24 are located directly beneath washing probes 84P and drying probes 86P. Further, the radial distance between washing probes 84P and drying probes 86P matches a multiple of the radial distance between next adjacent cuvette ports 20 in order to create a mated array of washing probes 84P and

drying probes 86P directly above cuvette ports 20. When curved slide 92 is positioned by motor 94 in its uppermost position, the lowermost portions of washing probes 84P and drying probes 86P are positioned above the top openings 77 of reaction cuvettes 24 in cuvette ports 20. Conversely, when curved rail 92 is lowered by motor ~~94~~ 92 into its lowermost position and washing probe solenoids 84S and drying probe solenoids 86S are not engaged, washing probes 84P and drying probes 86P are freely lowered and positioned immediately above the bottom surface 75 of reaction cuvettes 24 in cuvette ports 20.

[0040] Fig. 9 further shows washing probe 84P as comprising a wash line ~~83~~ 84W for supplying a pulsed stream of a cleaning detergent in de-ionized water or alternately a pulsed stream of rinsing de-ionized water from washing manifold 84, wash line ~~83~~ 84W having a lowermost portion for extending into cuvettes 24 to be washed, an upper portion extending out of wash probe 84P into washing manifold 84 and exiting therefrom at a lowermost portion of washing manifold 84. In FIG. 11, washing manifold 84 may be seen to provide an uninterrupted pathway for wash tube 84W and an external connection to a source 87 of cleaning detergent in de-ionized water, and in the alternate, rinsing de-ionized water.